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ABSTRACT

A fifty-hour workshop was conducted in Japan using the Silent Way, an approach to teaching and learning created by Dr. Caleb Gattegno. Chinese was the language taught, and most of the participants were teachers of Japanese and/or English. The materials and techniques used, the type of language dealt with, the reasons behind these approaches, and this group's reactions to the Silent Way are discussed. A detailed description of the first day of the workshop is given, and the following areas are dealt with: (1) the effect of a silent teacher on learning, and the teacher's and students' use of the students' language; (2) pronunciation and reading, and the use of the color-coded charts; (3) structures and how their meaning was communicated and practiced; (4) the role of mistakes and correction; (5) the place of peer teaching and correction; (6) the type of vocabulary used; (7) views on note-taking and homework; (8) the timing and pace of the week; (9) the degree of student and teacher involvement; (10) group discussion, or feedback, sessions; and (11) learning. (Author/CFM)

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The Silent Way

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The Silent Way is an approach to teaching and learning which was created by Dr. Caleb Gattegno. In his book, *Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools the Silent Way*, he describes the spirit of this way as being "the subordination of teaching to learning" (Gattegno, 1972: 1). He further states that "this is not a method or a device or a system or a program, but it is being sensible and sensitive to the reality of different learning situations" (Gattegno, 1972: 92).

The underlying philosophy of this approach is the importance placed on learning, focusing on the development of the learner's acceptance of the responsibility for his or her own learning and of the learner's self-dependency. The techniques and materials which have been developed are aimed toward this goal. There is a constant emphasis upon the learner's development of an inner criteria of rightness, correctness and adequacy in his or her usage of the language. Dr. Gattegno writes, "In the hands of expert teachers the materials lose their predominance, the teacher his dominant role, the language its appearance as *the* target. Instead, everything and everybody serves one aim, to make everyone into the most competent learner." (Gattegno, 1972: 89)

In order to learn how to be a Silent Way teacher, the Gattegno Language School conducts workshops in various languages. Thus, even the concept of teacher training is replaced by a concept of

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"teacher learning". Ms. Shelley (Shiow-ley) Kuo, Director of the Gattegno Language School in New York, conducted a fifty-hour workshop in Chinese the Silent Way, in Kyoto August 13-19, 1976. Thirty-two people, Japanese and Westerners, most of whom are teachers of Japanese and/or English, were the learners in this workshop. This article will discuss what materials and techniques were used, the type of language dealt with and more importantly the reasons behind these approaches, and this group's reactions to the Silent Way. The material used as a basis for this article were the questionnaires filled out as an evaluation of the Silent Way workshop, and ninety pages of transcripts of the discussions the participants had.¹ It is hoped that through discussing the major themes of these discussions, the reader may be able to form a clear understanding of the Silent Way. It must be pointed out here that there is no such thing as a standardized Silent Way, but rather, as a Silent Way teacher, one does what is necessary in each learning situation. This is a report on how classes in Chinese were conducted, and how this group of students, as teachers and learners, reacted to these classes.

First of all, the following materials were used:

- 1) A colored "phonic code" chart, called a Fidel, with each vowel and consonant sound being represented by a different color, and tones indicated by small lines and dots.
- 2) A color-coded chart of *hiraganā*, one of the Japanese phonetic syllabaries.
- 3) Twelve color-coded charts of Chinese characters, with forty characters per chart.
- 4) Two metal pointers

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This paper could not have been written without the valuable assistance of Nancy Nakanishi, of the Nagoya College of Foreign Languages, who made these transcripts, and who with Thalia Alberts, of Time-Life, participated in editing these transcripts and questionnaires, selecting the points that make up the bulk of this article. In addition, the comments and critique by Tom Robb, of Matsushita Overseas Training Center, and Doug Tomlinson, of Mobil Sekiyu Kabushiki Kaisha, were essential to help make this article as objective and clear as possible.

- 5) A box of colored wooden rods
- 6) A blackboard
- 7) Things which happened to be in the classroom.

As an introduction to how these materials were used, and what techniques were employed, the following is a brief description of the first day. The class arrangement was simple, with students sitting in three semi-circles facing the front of the room. The charts were taped to the wall, and the teacher stood behind a table in front of the charts.

Class began at 9:00 with the teacher pointing to the *hiragana* character あ (pronounced [ã]) which was written in white. The teacher motioned for the students to say this, and then pointed to the white rectangle indicating the same sound on the Fidel chart with the pointer, and back and forth while the students spoke. She continued in this way for all of the sounds included in Japanese, and only spoke in Chinese, and then only once each, to give the seven or eight sounds which are not found in Japanese. Tones were also introduced in this way; by pointing to the mark and indicating with her hand the direction of the tone. The teacher gave directions in English to help in the production of these sounds and tones. This practice continued for about ninety minutes, with various combinations indicated, and then series of combinations. Next, the teacher wrote four lines on the chalkboard and indicated that they represented certain sounds by pointing to the colored rectangles on the Fidel chart, and then to the lines. This continued until there were about thirteen "phrases" on the board and students had practiced "reading" these a number of times. The teacher then picked up the rods,² and indicated that the meaning of the sounds represented by these lines were the rods, the names of the colors of the rods, and the number of rods. She then held up various

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The wooden rods come in ten different colors and lengths. The smallest is a white cube one cubic centimeter in size; the longest, an orange rod ten centimeters in length. Other rods vary in length from two to nine centimeters, and there are rods for each color and/or length. They are sometimes called Cuisenaire rods or Algebricks, and were originally developed for teaching mathematics. The colors of the rods have no relation to the pronunciation color codes.

combinations of rods and students described what she was holding. Near the end of the 2-1/2 hour period, she held the box of rods toward a student, and gave a sentence which can be translated as, "Take one red rod, one yellow rod, and two blue ones.", and picked up the student's hand so that the command was followed. She then gave the box to the student and indicated that the student should give a command to the next student. This continued until eventually there were small groups of students with rods, asking each other to pick up various combinations of rods.

Throughout this time there was both choral and individual work. When students differed greatly on the pronunciation or tone, the teacher would call on individuals until one person was considered correct, then let the others listen. She often went back to the lines on the board and the colored rectangles. During this time individual students were called on to point out a series of sounds on the Fidel chart, and the other students said what was indicated. Though it was unknown to the students at this time, as they had been working with what they thought were random and various combinations of sounds, in reality these "random" sounds were the vocabulary and whole sentences that were later dealt with.

After a break there was more work on pronunciation, tones, phrasing and expansion and transitions of the patterns. As more vocabulary was introduced the teacher often used a technique for phrasing by indicating the sounds on her fingers, building speed, and showing where there should be pauses. The character charts were then introduced by pointing to those words the students had been dealing with. The characters were written with horizontal strips of color indicating their pronunciation. For example, light orange represented [m], and white represented [ä], so a character written with orange painted horizontally at the top and white painted horizontally at the bottom would elicit the pronunciation [mä]. The tone was indicated by one or two lines, or a dot, written to the right of the character. By pointing only to those characters included in the vocabulary the students had been using, there was no trouble understanding what the characters meant.

The afternoon session began with a group discussion, or feedback session, conducted in English, where the teacher asked the students

for their comments. It should be noted that the teacher did not allow people to talk about Chinese per se, but rather about their learning. The afternoon session continued until 5:00 with one break, and ended with another feedback session. This timing remained the same throughout the week, except that most class sessions lasted until 6:00.

During the first day the following was covered: all of the Chinese sound combinations; the five tones; the numbers one to three; ten colors; the word for rod and the counter³ used for rods; the command forms of the verbs take, give, put, show; pronouns and possessives; the words for right, left, both, eye, nose, hand, mouth, ear; in, where, here, there, please, thank you; and approximately twenty-seven Chinese characters. In addition, the concepts of phrasing, melody and rhythm in Chinese, the meaning of the various hand signals and techniques, and the concept that the teacher would be silent in Chinese were also covered.

During the feedback sessions people talked about the fast pace, and their frustration in trying to keep up with everything. The teacher pointed out that this eliminates time for translation, and that the pace was necessary at this time as it was important to get the rhythm and flow of Chinese, rather than to perfect only individual sounds. Two other concepts discussed were the effect, both negative and positive, of peer group teaching and correction, and the importance of making mistakes and learning how to correct them.

Thus, by the end of the first day people had become acquainted with many of the concepts of the Silent Way through their participation in learning Chinese as well as through discussing what had happened. No one felt 100 percent sure of everything that had been dealt with. At this time, the teacher drew attention to the place of sleep as an important factor in learning, and that she did not expect the students to have everything yet. In terms of the

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The use of counters in Chinese is similar to Japanese, and different from English. Nouns are classified by shape and other means, and the number of items is followed by a counter which precedes the noun. In English one would say "one pair of glasses", and "pair of" acts somewhat like a counter in Chinese.

language, people who had had no prior Chinese study were able to say with a high degree of fluency sentences such as, "Take one blue rod, three yellow rods, and two red rods. Give the blue one to him, one yellow one to me, two yellow ones to them, and put the red ones in there". In addition, much of this vocabulary could also be read on the character chart.

Though the pace varied somewhat during the week, in general the amount of language dealt with, and the amount of time students spent actively speaking, impressed everyone. By the end of the week about three hundred characters, many situations, most of the patterns, and a large number of idioms had been dealt with. How these situations were introduced and practiced, and the effect of the various methods used can perhaps best be seen by looking at the following areas:

- 1) The effect of a silent teacher on learning, and the teacher's and students' use of the students' language
- 2) Pronunciation and reading, and the use of the color-coded charts
- 3) Structures and how their meaning was communicated and practiced
- 4) The role of mistakes and correction
- 5) The place of peer teaching and correction
- 6) The type of vocabulary used
- 7) Views on note-taking and homework
- 8) The timing and pace of the week
- 9) The degree of student and teacher involvement
- 10) Group discussion, or feedback, sessions
- 11) Learning

as well as considerations with which a Silent Way teacher must deal in order to be an effective teacher.

1) A Silent Teacher and the Use of the Students' Language

First of all, the teacher was very silent in terms of the amount of Chinese she spoke. This approach is radically different from the more traditional concept of repetition drills, and having the teacher, or students, model things any number of times. The teacher felt it

was essential for her to remain silent during the first two days of class so that each student had a chance to work on his or her own vocal apparatus. As the week progressed she did speak more Chinese in conversations and in question-and-answer situations.

The teacher was not as silent in English. Instructions and guidance were often given to help the students know how things should be done. For example, she would say "sneeze for this sound" as a clue to the pronunciation, or "these need to go together" for phrasing, to give the students a clearer understanding of how to correct their Chinese. Because the students were not all native speakers of English these instructions were confusing at times. But English was never used to explain the meaning of words or patterns, nor to discuss their usage.

The teacher's role in seldom modelling sounds or words caused some contention, and many students felt they could not speak with confidence in their pronunciation and tones. At times there was great confusion because students were hearing many different pronunciations and sentences given at the same time by different students. Many were not sure which was correct until the teacher called on an individual. The teacher pointed out that when a teacher models something many times it becomes a never-ending process, because the teacher is never sure when or if a student is actually hearing the item. In general, the students found that they gave their full attention to the teacher when she did speak in Chinese, since they knew she would only say something once. Too many repetitions by the teacher, which can often make both the students and teacher bored, can also cause the language to lose its natural intonation and flow. These problems were avoided. However, a number of students felt that a judicious amount of modelling, say two or three times, would have facilitated their mastery of the sound or word concerned.

Another factor included in this is the Silent Way's approach to developing aural comprehension as well as verbal ability. There is the belief that if one can learn to listen to oneself, there is a very good chance that one can transmit this ability to listening to others. The teacher stated that people can only correct their own speech if they know what they are saying and then compare it to a model. It

is important that one begin with oneself, and not be dependent upon the teacher or peers to indicate mistakes or correct them all of the time. There were occasionally short aural comprehension tests on tones, numbers, and longer passages given. The results showed that most people could understand a majority of the Chinese the teacher spoke, though a few could not understand her.

2) The Use of the Color-coded Charts for Teaching Pronunciation and Reading

Although the teacher did not repeat sounds, it must be pointed out that the students were not left entirely to their own memory of a given sound. (This in fact would have been impossible since the teacher never said many of the words at all.) The extensive use of the charts, which through colors indicated the pronunciation of the characters, gave a visual cue for speaking. It also avoided the use of any romanization and the mispronunciations that this can lead to.⁴ (On the last day the teacher did give the correlation between the Peking Spelling System, one of the romanization systems for Chinese, and the colors for those who wanted to continue learning Chinese.) There were defects in the charts since some of the colors were fading and discriminating between certain shades of colors was especially difficult for those sitting near the back of the class. But overall, people found the use of the colors to be highly effective. Some felt that they were indispensable to learning, and others felt that they were useful but not necessary. Those few who never felt sure which sounds individual colors represented, naturally found the charts to be of less value. Because the Fidel chart and Chinese character charts were always in front of the students, it was always possible to compare an unknown character with a known one to

⁴ Different charts are also used for teaching English, French, Spanish and other languages which use the roman script. For these languages the alternate spelling of each sound is written in the same color. For example, the sound [i] in English is written in red, and includes I (I), i (like), igh (high), ie (lie), eye (eyes), ye (rye), eigh (height), is (isle), and ei (either). There are 21 colors for vowels, and 30 for consonants in English, compared with 8 and 22 respectively for Chinese. For a more detailed explanation of teaching reading through colors see Gattegno, Caleb, *Teaching Reading with Words in Color, A Scientific Study of the Problems of Reading*, Educational Solutions, Inc., New York City, New York, 1967.

check the pronunciation and tone.

For those who already knew the Japanese usage of the Chinese characters, the color codes and tone markings were highly effective. Occasionally there would be interference with meaning, for example, the character meaning "peace" in Japanese is the conjunction "and" in Chinese. But generally, those who could read Japanese found that their knowledge was another clue toward gaining an understanding of Chinese. For those who could not read Japanese, or who had a limited knowledge of Japanese, the ability to recognize and in some cases to write characters was far greater than from a similar time spent in Japanese classes. One factor that entered into this was the fixed position of the characters. It became apparent that many people were learning to "read" the characters by their position on the charts, rather than actually learning the character itself. This was interpreted in many different ways, but most people found that the fixed positions were helpful. In addition, when the characters were written on the blackboard, some people were able to make the transfer with a high degree of success. Since the teacher did not work with writing as much as she had with classes where the students had no background in the use of characters, it was difficult to estimate the validity of this point.

3) Structures and Their Meaning

Grammatical patterns, or structures, and their meaning and various possibilities for application and transformation were introduced through demonstrations. The teacher, through her own actions, the positioning of students, or more frequently the use of the rods, would indicate something and elicit a response from the students. At times a sentence was introduced via the charts, and then the demonstration to express its meaning followed. The concept of "meeting the students where they are" enters in here. Often, the students suddenly found themselves needing a certain phrase, which would logically follow in the situation being demonstrated. The students would recognize this need, and attempt to produce the needed item or would ask for it if it wasn't immediately given. Thus, instead of giving students something that was unrelated to what the students were thinking, the necessary language was supplied by the teacher in that situation. Once each

pattern was understood, substitutions with other vocabulary or tense, expansion, deletion and other types of drills were done.

Another important factor in the introduction of patterns is that whenever a new pattern was given, known vocabulary was used. Often the rods were employed, or other vocabulary that had already been covered. This avoided the confusion which arises when students are given both new patterns and vocabulary at the same time, and must struggle to sort everything out at once. The students had to guess the meanings and applications of things, and then check their hypotheses through saying things. Learning takes place deductively in the Silent Way. Sometimes people found through testing their hypotheses that either they had been mistaken, and had to work out new hypotheses, or they gained confidence in knowing they were correct. For example, after working with about five different ways to form questions in Chinese, and getting appropriate answers, students realized that there was no "yes" or "no" as such in Chinese. This was one of the important linguistic points that was discovered through using the language. At times, though, the demonstrations were ambiguous and thus it is extremely important that the teacher make each demonstration, or series of demonstrations, as clear as possible. The time spent in creating various ways to demonstrate things and allowing students to make and check their hypotheses, was perhaps longer than it would have been if the teacher had explained the point in English. However, many felt that by having the students actively involved in guessing and using the language, the phrases and vocabulary were actually learned and could be used, rather than simply understood.

The versatility of the rods was especially important in these demonstrations. The rods became any number of things at different times. For example, they became animals, buildings, food, people, etc., and could be easily manipulated. This is highly advantageous compared with a picture which can be very static. The rods were also used creatively to work on syntax, with function words represented by brightly colored rods, and the other words in the sentence represented by the white rods. Being able to see the changes in the placement of the rods as one was speaking was most effective in learning how to manipulate different patterns.

Whether or not a certain type of personality, or some dramatic ability is important in teaching was discussed in a group. The personality of a teacher does indeed play a part in a classroom situation. This teacher was very good at acting and demonstrating things, and this made things both easier to understand and more enjoyable. An outgoing personality or acting ability is necessary to the Silent Way as an approach, but is rather different from the ways in which a teacher can be creative and use his or her abilities within the classroom.

4) The Role of Mistakes and Correction

The role that mistakes play in learning, how they are made and by whom is very important in the Silent Way. This includes not only the teacher's role, but also that of the individual learner and his or her peers. In his book, Dr. Gattegno states, "Teachers have often held that their job is to correct mistakes, that they have noticed that only each learner can correct himself, nor have they studied how people finally arrive at the correct use of a language and what role mistakes play in the learning process." (Gattegno, 1972: 91) Included in this is one of the more important aspects of the Silent Way — that mistakes can only be corrected by the person who makes the mistake. This does not mean that the teacher does not have a responsibility to point out when mistakes are made, but it does mean that it is the student's responsibility to correct her own mistake. In the Silent Way the teacher guides the student, not expecting him or her to somehow be able to create a response, but gives the student whatever clues are needed to reach that end.

The importance of making mistakes and learning how to correct them was dealt with in many different ways. First of all, the teacher often said, "Those who know, be quiet. Those who do not know, speak up." If a student was unsure of a sentence or word, the student was encouraged to give his or her guess. It was more important to say something, right or wrong, rather than not say anything. Only then did the teacher and the student have some knowledge of where to begin.

The criterion by which the teacher decided what was acceptable or when something was termed acceptable, was not always the same.

to the students. For example, when a student was trying to give a very long sentence, tones were often misproduced. Here the teacher pointed out the importance of recognizing the task at hand for the student. When the task was to produce a longer sentence, with all of the words properly used, then the sentence itself was corrected, and the fact that the tones were wrong was indicated, but not dealt with at that time. At other times one word or group of words, or the phrasing, was chosen as being the main task and worked on a great deal. To the students the choice of the task sometimes seemed arbitrary.

There was never a time when the teacher gave up on a student, or stopped a student from trying to say something. Instead, the teacher continued to guide until the student had control of his or her target in the language. In not allowing peers to give the answer to the person who was working on something, the amount of time spent in a one-to-one teaching/learning situation was occasionally great. Most people had assumed that during such times in a class all the other students would tune out and become bored. But surprisingly this proved to be untrue. Many of the people found that this became their chance to review, confirm certain guesses that they had, repeat in their own minds, or even rest their minds for a moment. Also, people found that since the class as a whole was speaking Chinese so often, at different paces and pitches, it was only when one person was picked out that they were able to focus on the correct response. After the first day students did not wait to be called on, but more and more often initiated things.

Another type of mistake was that of the teacher. The teacher constantly had to be deciding which technique to use, what order things should be dealt with, the timing and pace of the class, etc. In the teacher's mind there were two types of mistakes she could make. One type, which was easily corrected, was where something was introduced at the wrong time, or characters were pointed to out of order. This was simply cleared up by the teacher indicating that the students should forget it. But a more drastic type of mistake was one where the teacher didn't help a student who hadn't understood something, or didn't recognize that someone needed further work on a certain item. The student would then become

frustrated, and have no means for working with learning that information. Further, helping a student in the wrong way causes more harm than good. Just as it was important for students to correct their own mistakes, the teacher recognized the importance for her to correct her own mistakes.

5) Peer Teaching and Correction

It is impossible to say in general whether or not peer teaching was encouraged, since it depended greatly upon the situation. Students were discouraged from giving translations, as well as from giving the answer to a student who was working on a certain task, for this would have been against the important concept of learners becoming self-dependent. But the teacher did allow peers to give someone a vocabulary item that was not felt to be an important function word. Occasionally, students also gave examples in Chinese to help other students understand and be able to use certain vocabulary items better. Since the teacher did not repeat things, or in many cases say things even once, the students were constantly listening to each other. None the less, the lines of communication were generally between the individual students and the teacher and only infrequently between the students. Thus, although the students had a much higher degree of freedom to speak, to use their own minds actively, to develop their own hypotheses, and to correct themselves, the teacher was almost always the center of attention.

One example of the application of self correction combined with peer teaching was the approach taken to correcting a quiz on numbers. On the third day numbers, from one to the trillions, were introduced in a two-hour block of time. Students were working on saying the long numbers, and the teacher especially had the students concentrate on the tones, phrasing and breathing necessary to speak these longer patterns. At the end of the practice time the teacher gave a quiz. She asked students to write down ten numbers which she gave once each. To correct this quiz, the teacher did not write the numbers on the board, which would have perhaps been the quickest way, but rather had the students individually read their answers. After a few examples had been given, and the students generally knew what others had written, the teacher then either

indicated who had the correct answer, or said it herself once. Thus correcting the test itself became part of the learning process as a whole.

6) The Type of Vocabulary Used

The vocabulary which was chosen was not determined solely by its frequency of use, but rather consideration was also given to what could be learned through learning certain items. The Silent Way distinguishes between what is termed "functional vocabulary" and "luxury vocabulary". Functional vocabulary is that which shows the spirit of the language, including its approaches to various situations, and patterns which give the general picture of the language. A luxury word is one which is, for example, a noun which is not very common, or grammatical terms which one only uses in talking about a language. It is believed that no matter how large a vocabulary one has, there are always limits. And if a large vocabulary is the only thing a person has, then it is useless information. But if one understands the general picture and flow of the language, knows how to use different types of vocabulary, and has learned how to learn, then the student can fit the luxury words into a functional framework. This is considered to be the bridge to fluency.

Therefore, at the end of the week people actually knew very few nouns, yet had the ability to use nouns and other types of vocabulary. Luxury words can be learned outside of a class, with a dictionary or a text. Nonetheless, there were some words which could be considered luxury words which were introduced. These included certain verbs, nouns, and other words which were useful in expanding the application of certain structures. The teacher felt it was her responsibility toward those who were ready for the extra vocabulary to give it to them, but indicated that she did not expect everyone to retain all of these extra words. She gave an analogy to one who lays out a large feast. If you have a small appetite, don't eat that much. If your stomach is much bigger, eat until your stomach is full. But those who aren't ready to eat more should be at ease with what they can eat. Therefore, knowing the function words is considered to be far better than memorizing a list of vocabulary items and not knowing how to use them.

The vocabulary dealt with was specifically geared toward the usage of various patterns and structures in Chinese. Some of the patterns were expanded, and others were not. (For example, the phrase "The brown rod is longer than the red one." was expanded to include taller, shorter, older, etc. Yet the phrase, "I want to go to Osaka tomorrow." was not expanded into very many different place names. However, other substitutions of tense and person were practiced.) Vocabulary such as the numbers to the trillions were used for teaching breathing, rhythm and phrasing rather than because it was important to know the words in and of themselves. Thus, different vocabulary was used to reach different goals.

The characters on the charts were arranged so that related vocabulary was more or less grouped together on one chart. During the week some of the charts were used more frequently and fully covered, while others were hardly used at all.

7) Note-taking and Homework

There was never any homework assigned during the week, and the majority of the people were happy because they had very little energy left at the end of each day. Yet in looking at this approach in terms of weekly classes and other situations, reinforcement outside of the class seems desirable. Classroom learning could be augmented by a set of Chinese character cards written in the color code for home study, patterns to practice with, and/or a text for individual use. For Chinese there are as yet no such Silent Way materials available, though Educational Solutions, Inc.,⁵ has produced charts, worksheets, and other materials for English and other languages. The teacher did emphasize that the type of text and materials most desirable were those so designed that the student would have to do most of the work by himself or herself, and not be allowed to passively read. Even though homework was not assigned many people found themselves thinking various phrases in Chinese, and otherwise "unconsciously" reviewing. In a sense, getting a good night's sleep was homework.

⁵ A list of all available materials can be obtained by writing Educational Solutions, Inc., 80 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, 10011, U.S.A.

Students were frequently asked not to take notes during the classes, which to many seemed to preclude the chance of reviewing. It was discovered by most of the note takers that taking down notes, especially in romanized form but also in Chinese characters, was very distracting. If one was taking notes and not following the flow of the class, various cues and vocabulary were often lost. The teacher stated that when a student writes something he or she is unsure of, mistakes are often reinforced. Furthermore, even when the notes are correct there is a tendency for students to become too dependent on their notes, instead of themselves.

One type of note-taking that the teacher considered beneficial were notes which a student wrote after a class to see how much was retained. This type of exercise can be a way to check oneself, and the student can bring up items he or she is unsure of in the next class session. This attitude toward note-taking was controversial among those who attended, since immediate memorization was not always possible and each day's class ran to eight hours or so. Many felt that true retention only comes through usage, and therefore the time spent writing precludes practice time. However, it was generally felt that with home study materials available for reinforcement and review, the overall effectiveness of this approach would have been higher.

8) Timing and Pace

For any class the pace is always a difficult point to determine. Decisions must always be made quickly, and deciding upon the right place and time for many things is the teacher's responsibility. But in the Silent Way the overall timing is a "two-way" affair. Though it is clear that it is the teacher's responsibility to pace the class, if the teacher does not perceive the student's confusion and begins to move on to a new area before the students are ready, it is also the student's responsibility to communicate this to the teacher.

Overall the intensity and pace of the class was far higher and faster than any others the people had either taught or attended. This fast pace was important to avoid translation, as was mentioned earlier. In addition, the momentum of the class was gradually built up because so many people were actively participating in the class. In considering how much students can absorb in a certain amount

of time, it was found that many could eventually absorb more through the faster pace, and catch things originally missed when they were brought up again.

9) Involvement

People agreed also that compared with other classes, the total involvement of the greater part of such a large class was impressive. It was expressed by some as being a game or a puzzle that the students were putting together. The fact that students had to take the initiative and responsibility for their own learning meant that people could not sit back passively and listen to a lecture, as can happen in other language classes. Overall the energy and motivation of the students throughout the class periods seemed to be generated because people were being challenged mentally as adults.

This involvement was not always demonstrated by all the students saying things out loud all of the time, for there were times when individuals were as silent as the teacher. Nonetheless, these individuals felt involved through watching the demonstrations, listening to others, and working on their own hypotheses.

This high level of involvement included the teacher. She was constantly paying attention to the class, the individuals within the class, and trying to be aware of where the class was going. In situations where ninety percent of the class understood a certain point, the teacher had to react to the remainder and find a means to satisfy them. As the students learned more Chinese and took the initiative more often, having gained some freedom in the language, the teacher's position should have become less dominant. From the fourth day the students indicated quite clearly the direction they would like to go and most of the students felt that they had a very high control of the subject matter, pacing, etc. Yet the authority of the teacher was recognized by the students as she remained in the center, and guided and made decisions constantly.

10) Feedback sessions

During the week there were usually two daily group discussions, or feedback sessions, conducted in English. They lasted anywhere from twenty minutes to an hour, but averaged about twenty-five minutes. The teacher decided on the timing of these, and directed them by asking an opening question and/or responding to the

students' remarks. Students also began talking with each other, with the teacher commenting at times.

These sessions were potentially important for both the teacher and the students. They were important to help the teacher in making corrections in the directions she took in introducing the language, and in finding out the needs of the students in order to guide them into becoming better learners. The teacher stated that the thirty minutes would benefit the students in the long run, since even more time would be wasted if she wasn't prepared to meet the students' needs. A potential value to the students was in making them aware of how they were learning things and pointing out what had been done in class. For example, when one student expressed frustration because the teacher wouldn't repeat a sound, all of the students agreed. However, the teacher asked what the student did with her frustration, and the discussion arising from her answer was more important in helping the students. This discussion centered on the students' acceptance of not being able to learn everything the first time it is introduced, and the students' responsibility toward their own learning. Two things not discussed in these sessions were the Chinese language itself, and consideration of what might have happened if things had been done differently. The teacher often pointed out that if something hadn't happened, you couldn't say what would have happened. The approach was to look at what really did happen and work from there. Even though this avoided many pointless discussions on hypothetical issues, it also left unanswered many questions about applying this approach to other situations.

About half of the students found the feedback sessions in general to be useful and/or interesting. At times people felt the benefit to the students was low, and that the time would have been better spent working in Chinese. (During the latter part of the week there were times when students asked questions in Chinese, and the teacher answered in Chinese.) The teacher also felt that those who didn't talk during the sessions were not being "charitable" in not allowing her to have a means for checking her hypotheses on the students' reactions and needs. Some people also disliked the sessions when comments became uncritical and unconstructive, and

resembled a confessional type of encounter group. This did not happen often, but it did happen. The teacher seemed to feel that these sessions were essential for her, and did benefit the students.

In that people were primarily at the workshop to learn about the Silent Way as teachers, rather than to learn Chinese itself, the feedback sessions were a chance to question and discuss the techniques and philosophies behind the Silent Way. Overall, the aim of the sessions became one of dealing with the learning process, and how people reacted to various techniques and approaches. The teacher also used these sessions to point out important factors in learning and considerations for teachers. She also felt that for students to know each other better eventually helped in the learning process. The sessions did at times directly affect the teacher's presentations and the students' actions, and in that way they benefited everyone.

11) Learning

Looking at how learning takes place, through observing oneself as a learner and learning about the learning process itself, is valuable to all teachers and students. The focus on this during the week was not always clear, but it was dealt with frequently. Its importance was pointed out clearly when the teacher stated that she was not teaching Chinese, or even working with Chinese. Instead, she said that she was working with the students and helping them to learn how to learn, and that the students were working with Chinese. The teacher's position was once described as a catalyst, rather than one who tries to beat things into peoples' heads. It is something of a mistake even to say the teacher taught Chinese, but rather one should say that the teacher gave people language items and tools to work with, and made sure the students could work with these. To many, the ability to look at the learning process and to guide students into becoming better learners, was far more important than the Chinese they learned. This perhaps best expresses what is meant by the fundamental concept of "the subordination of teaching to learning".

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